

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

Program 3.1

Question No. 73

Senator Heffernan asked the following question at the hearing on 19 October 2009:

In relation to the former Quarantine Station on West Island Cocos (Keeling) Islands and the Crown Land Management Plan;

- a) In your answer to Question No. 120 at last Budget Estimates, you state you have engaged a consultant to develop a Crown Land Management Plan, what is the name of the consultant, what are his terms of reference, how much is this consultant costing, when do we expect to see his report?
- b) In your answer to Question 146, you state the Department is not in the process of disposing of any portion of the former quarantine station, if so, what will the Government do with the former quarantine station?
- c) Once the Crown Land Management Plan is finalised, what is the expected time line for the sale of assets and land (other than the quarantine station)?

The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:

a) The consultant engaged to report on the Crown Land Management Plan is GHD Pty Ltd.

The terms of reference provided to GHD Pty Ltd are as follows:

First Stage – Inventory and Audit

- Utilise and collate existing Department and WA Department for Planning and Infrastructure information on Crown land in the IOT,
- Collect additional information where required (it is estimated that there is only a small gap in information currently collected or available), and
- Develop an audit report of Crown land including physical characteristics of land and other matters that affect the land to enable the capabilities of the land to be properly assessed.

Second Stage – Land Capability and Suitability Assessment

- Undertake a land capability assessment, determining the physical constraints of the land and opportunities for uses of the land,
- Undertake a land suitability assessment involving the identification of the most suitable uses for the land,
- Present a draft document on the most suitable uses for each piece of Crown land for comment by the Department,
- Consult with Parks Australia North on the draft document,
- Consult with the Shires of Christmas Island and of Cocos (Keeling) Islands on the draft document, and
- Develop a draft document for public consultation on the most suitable use for each piece of Crown land incorporating the Department's, Parks Australia North and both Shires comments.

Third Stage – Joint Consultation

- Undertake, jointly with the Department, general stakeholder and public consultation on the draft CLMP, and
- Undertake consultation with other Australian Government agencies on the draft CLMP.

Fourth Stage – Plan of Management

- Utilising comments from public consultation and the capability and suitability assessment phase, finalise a plan of management for Crown land including priority listing (i.e. short term, medium term, long term) and management options for the implementation of future uses (i.e. sale, lease, licensing, reservation),
- Provide a printed version of the plan of management, and
- Provide the plan of management in a format suitable for incorporation into GIS.

The total cost of this consultancy is \$129,883.60.

The report has been completed and is available on the Department's website at www.ag.gov.au.

b) The Department is in the process of completing an Outline Development Plan (ODP) for the site of the former quarantine station in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The ODP will consider the broad recommendations of the Crown Land Management Plan and will be completed after close consultation with the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands and the local community.

c) The Government has not made a decision to sell, or otherwise dispose of, land on Christmas Island or the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.